

**Irish – Scottish Forum
for Spatial Planning**

The Canada Room and Council Chamber
Queen's University Belfast

Friday 18 September 2009

Rural Planning and Development:
Comparative Perspectives
on a Rural White Paper



Rural Planning and Development: Comparative Perspectives on a Rural White Paper

The Institute of Spatial and Environmental Planning at Queen's University Belfast, The School of Geosciences and The AHRC Centre for Irish and Scottish Studies at University of Aberdeen, and The National Institute of Regional and Spatial Analysis at National University of Ireland Maynooth have established the Irish – Scottish Forum for Spatial Planning. Its purpose is to critically examine the interaction between strategic planning and the development of urban and rural areas in Ireland, Northern Ireland and Scotland.

The purpose of this second meeting of the Forum is, firstly, to place the emergence of a forthcoming Rural White Paper for Northern Ireland in the

comparative context of Rural White Papers for Scotland (1995) and Ireland (1999), and secondly, to identify future trajectories for rural planning and development.

This conference at Queen's University Belfast is convened under the auspices of the Irish Social Sciences Platform (ISSP), an island-of-Ireland platform of interdisciplinary research and graduate training focusing on the delivery of balanced development, the creation of sustainable communities and the enhancement of a knowledge society. It embraces 8 institutions and 19 disciplines and is funded under the Programme for Research in Third Level Institutions (PRTL14).

Speaker profiles

Brendan Bartley lectures in Urban Geography and Planning at the National University of Ireland Maynooth where he is Deputy Director of the National Institute for Regional and Spatial Analysis (NIRSA) and the University's Programme Director for the International Centre for Local and Regional Development (ICLRD). He holds professional qualifications in town planning and transportation planning and worked as a professional planner in both the public and private sectors prior to joining NUI Maynooth in 1994. He is joint editor of *Understanding Contemporary Ireland*, published by Pluto Press in 2007 and is a co-author of *The Atlas of the Island of Ireland: Mapping Social and Economic Change (2008)*. He has been directly involved over the past fifteen years in a number of European collaborative urban research networks in the connected areas of spatial planning, governance and urban regeneration and he is the current Irish Contact Point for the European Spatial Planning Observatory Network (ESPON).

Seamus Boland has been Chief Executive Officer of Irish Rural Link since 2002. He is responsible for directing the activities of Irish Rural Link - a national network of rural community groups. As a member of the Community and Voluntary Pillar, he was involved in the negotiations of two National Agreements: Sustaining Progress and Towards 2016. He has represented the Community and Voluntary Pillar on the following National Development Plan monitoring committees: NDP / Community Support Framework; Economic and Social Infrastructure Operational Programme; Productive Sector Operational Programme; Border Midland and Western Operational Programme; and LEADER. Seamus is a member of the National Economic and Social Council (NESCC), the National Economic and Social Forum (NESF), the Press Council and the Board of North South Rural Voice. He was appointed Regional Director of the Midland Regional Youth Service in 1995, a member of the Carnegie Rural Commission in 2004, which is charged with the examination rural issues in Great Britain and Ireland. He is a graduate in Rural and Community Development from National University of Ireland Maynooth and was previously Manager of Tullamore Traveller Workshop and Shannon Banks Traveller Workshop in Athlone.

Dr Sydney Elliott is Senior Lecturer in the School of Politics, International Studies and Philosophy at Queen's University Belfast. His main teaching interests include British and Irish Politics, Voting Behaviour and Elections. He is the author of several books on Northern Ireland elections since 1973, especially a series on District Council elections since 1977. He is co-author of *The Northern Ireland Assembly, 1982-86* (Hurst/ St Martins, 1988) and *Northern Ireland: A Political Directory 1968-99* (Blackstaff) which is into a fifth edition. He has contributed two chapters to *Agreeing to Disagree: A Guide to the Northern Ireland Assembly*, published by the Stationery Office in 2001. He also wrote the Northern Ireland chapter in S. Henig and L. Baston, *The Political Map of Britain* (Politicos, 2002). His most recent book chapter is The Electoral Dynamics of the Belfast Agreement in B. Barton and P.J. Roche, *The Northern Ireland Question* (Palgrave/Macmillan, 2009). He writes regularly for *Economic Outlook and Business Review* and for *Fortnight*, an independent magazine, and occasionally for *The Irish Times*. He is a regular contributor to BBC radio and television coverage of elections in Northern Ireland.

Pamela Dore graduated with a first class honours degree in Geography from the National University of Ireland, Maynooth in 2008. During her studies she completed a SPUR internship in 2007 with the Department of Geography, which included research in areas of health and economic geography. She undertook a summer internship in 2008 with the National Institute for Regional and Spatial Analysis (NIRSA) in NUI Maynooth and has continued to work as a research assistant in NIRSA undertaking work on a number of projects including involvement in the All-Island Research Observatory (AIRO) a research unit and interactive spatial data portal to produce all-island spatial datasets and specialist tools to aid their analyses, and to undertake academic and applied mapping research.

Michael Hughes as Chief Executive Officer, has overall responsibility for the strategic and operational performance of Rural Community Network and has led the organisation through the development of the current strategic plan 2007-2013.

Speaker profiles (continued)

He consistently engages with a range of statutory, voluntary and community organisations highlighting the assets of rural communities, the inequalities that currently exist and how local people must be allowed play an important part in the future sustainability of their community. Michael's current work is focusing on the strategic development of a rural community development networking infrastructure, which is relevant to local rural communities, and the future support to this infrastructure from both central and local government. As a member of various European Programme Monitoring Committees, Michael is a strong advocate of *A Shared Future* and the promotion of an equality agenda. In developing a highly skilled staff team, Michael believes that the key to this has been creating a work environment where each staff member is able to realise their potential for the benefit not only of the organisation, but more importantly for those most vulnerable within rural communities. Michael joined Rural Community Network in 1996 as Project Assessment Officer with the Peace & Reconciliation Programme. He has also held positions of Programmes Co-ordinator for Peace II and the Rural Community Estates Programme before his appointment as Chief Executive Officer. Michael holds a BSc Degree in Economics, Business Studies and Social Studies from Queen's University Belfast.

Dr Karen Keaveney is a Lecturer in the School of Planning, Architecture and Civil Engineering in Queen's University Belfast. She is a graduate of the Department of Geography, NUI Galway where she studied for a BA in Human and Physical Geography. She then completed a Masters in Regional and Urban Planning in UCD and a PhD in NUI Maynooth. Karen is an affiliate of the Joint Centre for Housing Studies, Harvard University and an Associate of the National Institute of Regional and Spatial Analysis (NIRSA) at the National University of Ireland Maynooth. Her research interests include the spatial literacy needs of planners, cross-jurisdictional planning, and rural restructuring. She also has an interest in 'alternative perspectives' on planning, using media such as film and literature to understand individual and community perceptions of space and place.

Dr Philomena de Lima is the Director of the Centre for Remote and Rural Studies, previously the UHI PolicyWeb, (University of the Highlands and Islands) based in Inverness. She played a central role in PolicyWeb since it was established in 2004 to consider rural and island issues related to social and public policy development in Scotland. She has been actively involved in researching rural policy issues, particularly with regard to social exclusion, minorities and equalities, and has published widely on these topics. Her current portfolio includes appointments with Carnegie UK Trust; Carnegie UK Trust Enquiry into Civil Society, Scottish Agricultural College Rural Development Council and Scottish Funding Council Public Policy Action Group.

Norman MacAskill is Head of Rural Policy with the Scottish Council for Voluntary Organisations and has played an active role in Scottish rural policy development, representing the interests of the rural voluntary sector. Norman was brought up in a crofting community in north-west Scotland and has previously worked as an archaeologist, an IT consultant and a political organiser.

Martin McDonald has over 30 years of experience in public service, commencing his career with local government in 1973. He later went on to work in the Town & Country Planning Service and in 1990 joined the Department of Agriculture and Rural Development as a Rural Area Co-ordinator under the Northern Ireland Rural Development Programme. Martin is well recognised as a key figure in the development and implementation of major rural development initiatives. He joined the Rural Development Council

as Chief Executive in 1999 and remains a key influencer in rural development and in the development of programmes affecting rural areas.

Keith Morrison is the Director of Rural Policy in the Department of Agriculture and Rural Development in Northern Ireland. His responsibilities include development of a Rural White Paper, management of the Northern Ireland Rural Development Programme, rural anti poverty and social inclusion work, and rural proofing.

Dr Michael Murray is Reader in Rural Spatial Planning at the Institute of Spatial and Environmental Planning, Queen's University Belfast and Research Associate at the National Institute of Regional and Spatial Analysis, National University of Ireland Maynooth. His research interests include strategic spatial planning and community led rural development. He has published widely in books, journals and reports.

Dr Patricia O'Hara is Policy Manager at the Western Development Commission where she and a small team of policy experts publish analyses and commentary on regional and rural issues. She has served on various boards and advisory committees to government, including the Information Society Commission. Pat is currently chairperson of the National Statistics Board, and is a board member of Pobal, and the National Institute for Regional and Spatial Analysis at National University of Ireland Maynooth. She holds a PhD in Sociology from Trinity College Dublin and formally worked as a Senior Research Officer at Teagasc; as a lecturer at University College Cork; and as a national and international consultant. She has written and published widely on regional and rural development issues.

Dr Alan Renwick is Director of the Rural Policy Centre and Head of the Land Economy and Environment Research Group at Scottish Agricultural College, Edinburgh. He completed his BSc (Hons) at Wye College, University of London in 1988 and his PhD at the University of Newcastle in 1992. He spent 12 years at the University of Cambridge in the Department of Land Economy before moving to Scotland in 2004. He has over 15 years of experience working on a wide range of rural issues although his main area of work has been in policy evaluation. He has undertaken studies for such bodies as Defra, the Environment Agency and the National Audit Office

Dr Sally Shortall is Reader in Sociology at Queen's University Belfast, Northern Ireland. She has over seventy publications in rural sociology and rural social policy, and research grant earnings of some £1 million. She was an Economic and Social Research Council Fellow in the Department of Agriculture and Rural Development Northern Ireland for 2008-2009.

Professor Jim Walsh, DLitt. is Deputy President and Vice-President for Innovation at National University of Ireland Maynooth and also a member of the Senate of the National University of Ireland. A founding member of the National Institute for Regional and Spatial Analysis (NIRSA), he has also been a member of several national fora including the National Economic and Social Council and the Rural Development Forum. He has published extensively on topics related to agriculture, regional and rural development and spatial planning. He was Co-Chairman of the Group that produced the *Rural Ireland 2025 Foresight Report* and he was also principal author and editor of *People and Place: A Census Atlas of the Republic of Ireland* (2007), and co-author (with Caroline Crowley and David Meredith) of *Irish Farming at the Millennium – A Census Atlas* (2008).

Programme

9.30am Registration and coffee

Session 1: Setting the Context

10.00am **Welcome to the Irish Scottish Forum for Spatial Planning and conference context.**

Michael Murray, Reader in Rural Spatial Planning, Institute of Spatial and Environmental Planning, Queen's University Belfast.

10.15am **The role of White Papers in public policy formulation and delivery.**

Sydney Elliott, Senior Lecturer, School of Politics, International Studies and Philosophy, Queen's University Belfast.

10.45am **Spatial planning: what value to rural areas?**

Martin McDonald, Chief Executive, Rural Development Council, Northern Ireland.

11.15am **Coffee break in the Canada Room**

Session 3: Perspectives on the Rural Policy experience of Ireland

2.00pm **New circumstances, new challenges for rural policy in Ireland.**

Patricia O'Hara, Policy Manager, Western Development Commission, Ireland, and Jim Walsh, Professor of Geography, Deputy President and Vice-President for Innovation, National University of Ireland Maynooth.

2.30pm **Community engagement in rural development in Ireland.**

Seamus Boland, Chief Executive, Irish Rural Link, Ireland.

3.00pm **Policy responses to changing patterns of rural settlement in Ireland.**

Karen Keaveney, Lecturer, Institute of Spatial and Environmental Planning and School of Planning, Architecture and Civil Engineering, Queen's University Belfast.

3.30pm **Coffee break in the Canada Room**

Session 2: Perspectives on the Rural Policy experience of Scotland

11.45am **The White Paper for Rural Scotland. Does prospect lie in retrospect?**

Alan Renwick, Land Economy Research Group Manager, Scottish Agricultural College, Edinburgh.

12.15pm **From policy to practice: the delivery of rural development in Scotland.**

Philomena de Lima, Director, Centre for Remote and Rural Studies, University of the Highlands and Islands, Inverness.

12.45pm **Community engagement in rural development in Scotland.**

Norman MacAskill, Head of Rural Policy, Scottish Council for Voluntary Organisations, Edinburgh.

1.15pm **Buffet lunch in the Canada Room**

Session 4: The Way Forward for Rural Policy within Northern Ireland

4.00pm **Background, processes and emergent themes for the Northern Ireland Rural White Paper.**

Keith Morrison, Department of Agriculture and Rural Development, Northern Ireland.

4.20pm **Building an evidence base for rural development delivery in Northern Ireland.**

Sally Shortall, Reader in Sociology, School of Sociology, Social Policy and Social Work, Queen's University Belfast.

4.40pm **The potential of G.I.S. for policy and practice.**

Pamela Dore, The All-Island Research Observatory, National University of Ireland Maynooth.

5.00pm **Key messages from this meeting of the Irish Scottish Forum for Spatial Planning.**

Michael Hughes, Chief Executive, Rural Community Network, Northern Ireland.

5.15pm **Close: The next meeting of the Irish Scottish Forum for Spatial Planning.**

Brendan Bartley, Deputy Director, National Institute of Regional and Spatial Analysis, National University of Ireland Maynooth.

5.30pm **Wine and cheese reception in the Canada Room**

Registration

Registration for the Forum is essential since places are limited. The event is free to attend and includes complimentary lunch, coffees, wine and cheese reception and all papers.

If you plan to attend, please pre-register by giving your details on isfsp@qub.ac.uk not later than Friday 4 September 2009.

For further information please visit the conference website:

<http://www.qub.ac.uk/issp/> or contact Dr Michael Murray, Institute of Spatial and Environmental Planning, Queen's University Belfast on m.r.murray@qub.ac.uk